

# New Hampshire's Clean School Bus Initiative

Newsletter for School Officials

December 2005

## *Message to Superintendents and Principals - Make Your Schoolyards "Idle-Free" Zones*

**W**hen cars and buses idle, they release unhealthy exhaust fumes that have been linked to asthma and lung cancer. Children are more susceptible to exhaust pollution because their lungs are still developing and they breathe at a faster rate than adults. Diesel exhaust from idling school buses is particularly harmful and can accumulate on and around buses, posing a health risk to drivers and children. When buses and cars idle in schoolyards, the exhaust can also pollute the air inside school buildings, posing a health risk to children throughout the day.

Eliminating unnecessary idling is a simple, cost-effective way to help reduce exposure to air pollution in your school communities. School officials can adopt "no-idling" policies for their schoolyards and promote this message to parents, students, teachers, and school bus drivers (see "No-Idling Tips" on other side). Enlist others to help promote the no-idling campaign through newsletters and take-home information cards. Student volunteers (through classroom projects or science/environmental clubs with teacher supervision) can hand out information and "Clean Air" stickers to bus drivers and parents who wait at schoolyards in idling vehicles. There are many ideas and tools available to help you get started!

### *Materials and Resources*

**M**any resources are now available to help school communities, school bus transportation providers, environmental officials, and others implement no-idling campaigns. The N.H. Department of Environmental Services (DES) provides free information and materials (including "No-Idling" signs, bus driver magnets, and sample newsletter articles) to school districts, fleet managers and bus drivers. DES staff are also available to speak with superintendents, school boards and school personnel about the health issues related to vehicle exhaust.

The Asthma Regional Council of New England has designed an on-line toolkit for reducing diesel emissions in school communities. The toolkit contains materials and resources created by the Asthma Regional Council and numerous organizations and agencies from around the country. The toolkit can be found at [www.astharegionalcouncil.org/about/\\_BusToolkit.htm](http://www.astharegionalcouncil.org/about/_BusToolkit.htm).



### *Benefits of Reducing Idling in Schoolyards*

- ✓ Helps protect the health of students and drivers from the harmful effects of exhaust fumes.
- ✓ Saves money.
- ✓ Saves fuel.
- ✓ Reduces wear and tear on engines.
- ✓ Improves air quality by reducing ozone-forming air pollutants and toxic air pollutants.
- ✓ Reduces greenhouse gas emissions that contribute to global climate change.

### *Update on School Bus Retrofit Project*

**I**n addition to reducing idling, retrofitting school buses with pollution control equipment is another way to reduce diesel exhaust. In 2004, DES received a grant from EPA to retrofit buses in the Manchester and Nashua School Districts with pollution control equipment. Vendor selection for this project is underway and expected to be complete this month. Once the vendor is selected, the competitive bid pricing for this retrofit control equipment will be made available to all school districts and bus contractors. Installation of pollution control equipment significantly reduces small particle pollution and toxic emissions from diesel exhaust.

To learn more or request materials from DES, contact: Kathy Brockett at 271-6284 or [kbrockett@des.state.nh.us](mailto:kbrockett@des.state.nh.us).

# Working Together for Healthy School Communities

School Officials and the N.H. Department of Environmental Services



## *No-Idling Tips for Schools and Drivers*



- Encourage all drivers – bus drivers and parents – to turn off engines as soon as they arrive in the schoolyard. PLEASE – do not allow engines to idle while discharging or waiting for passengers.
- Post signs in schoolyard loading and unloading areas to remind drivers to turn engines off. Signs are 12-inches by 18-inches and are available from DES free of charge (see sign example at right).
- In colder months, provide a space inside where bus drivers or parents who arrive early can wait. During athletic events, encourage bus drivers to use indoor space instead of remaining on the bus.
- Cold weather is always a concern in New Hampshire. Drivers should use common sense and good judgement when taking steps to reduce idling during the winter months. Safety and comfort of passengers is always the first priority when it comes to pupil transportation. When idling is necessary, drivers should limit idling time, based on outside temperature, according to state regulations (Env-A 1100) as follows:

Above 32 degrees F - 5 minutes

Between minus 10 and 32 degrees F - 15 minutes

Below minus 10 degrees F - No limit

- **Check to make sure your transportation manager/provider has submitted a “no-idling” commitment for 2006.** The map here shows the providers that committed as of January 2005 to implementing no-idling policies. DES, in partnership with the New Hampshire School Transportation Association, is asking all school bus transportation providers and drivers to once again make a written commitment to reduce school bus idling whenever possible. “No-Idling” pledge forms are due back to Kathy Brockett at DES by January 31, 2006. A new list of participating school bus providers will be publicized in the spring of 2006, so make sure your school district is on the list!

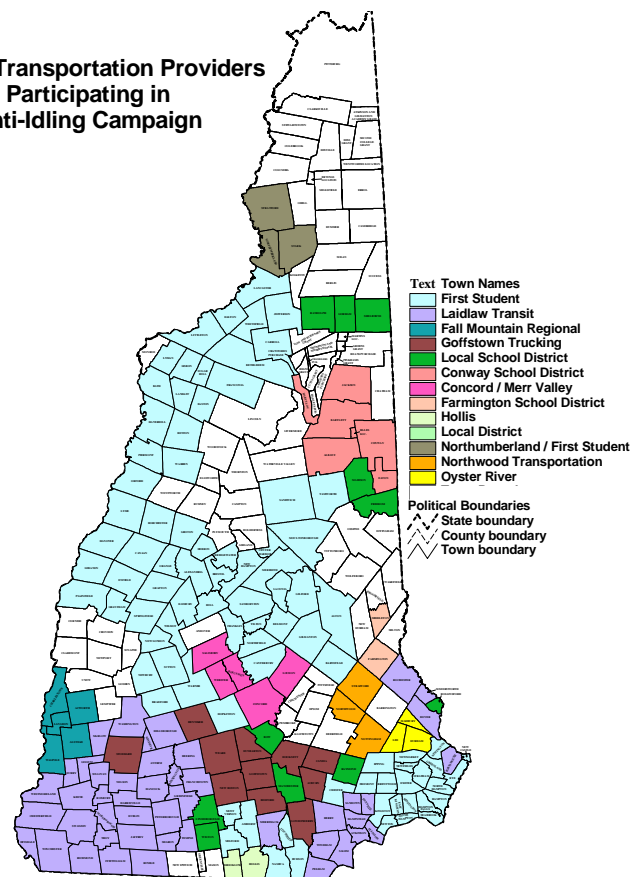


**Remember the Rule -  
No Idling at School!  
We'll all breathe a little easier.**



[www.des.nh.gov](http://www.des.nh.gov)

### School Transportation Providers Participating in Anti-Idling Campaign



Updated January 13, 2005